

Medical Treatment and Beliefs

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human beings, and in the past was used by the Tuareg to poison their enemies. However, this plant ²³² does not seem to be venomous for domestic animals which grow fat from eating it (cf. Maire 1933, ^{P24} p. 192). One plant (*Atriplex*) (*Artemisia judaica*) is said to have an intermediate position: When camels eat its green shoots they may contract entrail diseases, but the plant is also considered a remedy for entrail worms. Domestic animals which have eaten venomous plants are generally treated with liquid butter which is poured into their mouths. Venomous animals are also very dangerous for domestic animals, notably scorpions and snakes which abound everywhere. The treatment of swollen limbs caused by snake bites or scorpion stings is sometimes bleeding, but the Northern Tuareg also consider it effective to give the affected animal fat from a female barbary sheep and to place a little fat over the place where the animal has been bitten or stung. Under this heading of veterinary medicine ²³² mention must finally be made of the fact that tobacco is considered to possess curative qualities in the case of certain diseases. When camels get tired and slow owing to congestion during the hot summer season the Tuareg consider it an excellent remedy to put, as mentioned above, powdered tobacco leaves in the animals' eyes. This was frequently practised with my own camels, and it seems to me that the method is efficacious. ^{P25}

It is evident that many veterinary methods among those mentioned above are effective, and I believe ²³² that Tuareg veterinary methods are largely to be considered rational. It is a true that it is most difficult ¹¹⁴ for an anthropologist without any veterinary training to judge objectively the value of all treatments of stock-diseases. But French veterinary surgeons I consulted at Agadez held the view that the Tuareg methods they knew of were effective, though in specific cases of disease they could do better than the Tuareg, and one veterinary surgeon admitted that the Tuareg knew far more about camel-diseases than did modern veterinaries. It can be added that the Tuareg possess an anatomical knowledge of ²³¹ their animals which is no less than astonishing. Apoggi has noted 43 terms used by the Tuareg of ^{P15} Tasile-n-Ajjer to describe the exterior parts of a camel (Apoggi 1933), and this list is not complete. ^{P22} It goes without saying that the Tuareg also have a large vocabulary for internal organs which they know in detail from slaughtering. And I believe they have a fairly good knowledge of physiology.

I have elsewhere given some information of Tuareg medical methods applied to human beings ⁷⁵ (Nicolaisen 1961; cf. also Humann 1933), and I have stated that Tuareg medicine cannot be understood entirely without reference to religious and magic beliefs. This is to some extent also true of ⁽¹³⁾ their veterinary methods. But as far as I know there are many medical methods based on magic and religious ideas which are applied solely to human beings. This may seem quite natural.

Domestic animals may run the risk of being attacked by evil forces such as the evil eye and the evil ²³¹ mouth (*tehoj* in Ahaggar; *tugarchet* in Ayr), the *Kel Asuf* spirits, and the mystic power known as ⁷⁵⁴ *effama* or *tezma* in Ayr (cf. p. 21), and valuable animals may carry Islamic amulets as a protection ⁷⁵¹ against these evils. I have seen such amulets carried by a few rams and he-goats, but they are used ^{233*} particularly for camels, and I believe that most camel amulets are meant to protect the animals ²⁵¹ from the evil eye (the evil mouth). Against this malignant force camels may also be provided with ⁷⁵⁴ a donkey's hoof hung around the neck as an amulet. Another non-Islamic amulette is used for riding ⁷⁷² camels in Ayr:—Some Tuareg of this region hang the foot of a turtle around the camel's neck in order ^{P25} that their riding animal may not stumble.